

Huntington Beach Water Newsletter

The importance of healthy living soil

You may wonder why soil, the dirt beneath us, is the honorary topic in a newsletter focusing on water and the efficient use of water? As it turns out, soil is finally being widely recognized as an incredibly important part of a healthy environment and the true foundation for all living beings!

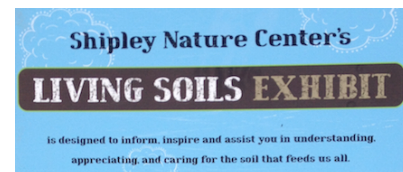
So, how exactly does healthy, carbon-rich soil relate to our urban Southern California existence and the water scarcity issues we face? Healthy, living, carbon-rich soils hold large amounts of water and it is estimated that every 1% increase in soil carbon, increases the soil's ability to hold an additional 60,000 gallons per acre! The many benefits includes vigorous plants, the recharging of aquifers and moisture for the microbial life in the soil, instead of precious water running off into the street creating urban run-off and ocean pollution. Soil also serves as an excellent cleaning agent of polluted, dirty water. Ultimately, the more water that stays on land and infiltrates into the soil, the less imported (expensive) water we will need to supplement with, throughout the year, to sustain our gardens.

A cheap, brilliant and beneficial solution to the excess carbon in the atmosphere is to literally sink the carbon back into the soil, which is where it belongs. Carbon has essentially leaked from the soil since we humans started farming, but it's the industrial farming practices over the past 100 years

that really have disturbed the soil carbon content. "Carbon is what lends fertility to soil and sustains plant and microbial life. Soil that's rich in carbon holds water, like a sponge. By contrast, water that falls on soil depleted of carbon streams off, causing erosion and leaching out nutrients" (Judith Schwartz, Cows Save the Planet).

How do we build carbon in the soil? On a personal level, we all can reduce our herbicide and pesticide usage, go organic, and create bio-diverse gardens with California native plants that are a perfect fit for our Mediterranean desert climate and local soils.

If you want to learn more about the significance, benefits and promises of living, carbon-rich soil, we recommend visiting Shipley Nature Center, located at 17851 Goldenwest Street, (714) 842-4772. Shipley's *Living Soils* exhibit is well worth a visit! Shipley also hosts classes on composting, the best and cheapest way to make living, healthy soil. The next '*Magic of Composting*' class takes place on Saturday April 25th, 9 am – 10.30 am.



FREE California Landscaping Classes!!!

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 14th, 2015 at 9 am – 12 Noon. Hosted by Utilities at 19001 Huntington St.

To register; www.surfcity-hb.org/hbwater/workshop-events/

In "Soils, Fertilizers and Plants" you will learn more about the importance of soil and how to create beautiful gardens that are adapted to our dry Mediterranean climate. The next landscaping class, "Irrigation systems, Watering and Garden Maintenance" will be held **March 21st**. We hope to see you! ☺

for more information on water issues, water conservation, water use efficiency, events, rebates and more; www.surfcity-hb.org/hbwater facebook: #Huntington Beach Water

With California facing one of the most severe droughts on record, Governor Brown declared a drought State of Emergency in January 2014, and directed state officials to take all necessary actions to prepare for water shortages. In response, the City of Huntington Beach declared a Level I water supply shortage effective September 1, 2014.

While a wet December provided California a foothold for drought recovery, three straight winters of subnormal precipitation will take time to fully recharge the reservoir levels and subsoil moisture back to normal. So how much rain would the state need to end the drought completely? 11 trillion gallons, accordingly to a NASA study, which is “the amount of water that flows over Niagara Falls in about 170 days’ time” as reported by CNN.

Water is a precious natural resource and we encourage our customers to use water wisely.

Level 1 Water supply shortage restrictions

- All plumbing system leaks must be repaired within 72 hours
- Use of automated irrigation system is limited to three (3) days per week in April through October and two (2) days per week in November through March.

New SUMMER Watering Schedule ~ April through October

Locations	Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
Single Family Home ~ Odd Addresses			●		●		●
Single Family Home ~ Even Addresses		●		●		●	
Multi-Family Residential		●		●		●	
HOA Common Areas		●		●		●	
Businesses		●		●		●	
Schools		●		●		●	

New WINTER Watering Schedule ~ November through March

Locations	Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
Single Family Home ~ Odd Addresses			●				●
Single Family Home ~ Even Addresses		●				●	
Multi-Family Residential		●				●	
HOA Common Areas		●				●	
Businesses		●				●	
Schools		●				●	

Exceptions to the Level 1 Watering Schedule:

- Use of low flow drip irrigation systems producing less than two gallons of water per hour
- Watering by a hand-held bucket or a hand-held hose equipped with a positive self-closing water shut-off nozzle
- Watering for a short time to adjust or repair an irrigation system

Quarterly Question: How much water can a homeowner save in one year, by having a water wise California friendly garden instead of the traditional grass yard?

A. 14,000 gallons B. 35,000 gallons C. 51,000 gallons

The answer will be in the next quarterly HB Water newsletter.

